



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Affairs Officer
610 N.W. Loop 410
San Antonio, Texas 78216
(210) 384-7440

**AUSTIN WOMAN CHARGED BY FEDERAL GRAND JURY
WITH ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF ALIENS FOR PROSTITUTION**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that Maria Magdalena Lopez-Torres, a resident alien living in Austin, Texas, was indicted today by a federal grand jury for the illegal importation of aliens for prostitution.

The three-count indictment charges Lopez-Torres with one count each of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, possession of a stolen firearm and importation of aliens for prostitution. The indictment alleges that on May 22, 2003, the defendant managed or supervised an operation where minor females were forced to engage in commercial sex acts. The indictment also alleges that on July 16, 2003, Lopez-Torres possessed a Sako bolt-action rifle and as a convicted felon, was prohibited from doing so. The indictment further charges that Lopez-Torres knew, or had reason to believe, that the rifle was a stolen firearm. Lopez-Torres' criminal history reflects a 2002 felony conviction in Williamson County, Texas, for tampering with a government record.

Upon conviction, Lopez-Torres faces up to ten years in federal prison per count. The defendant was arrested on July 26, 2004, in San Antonio, Texas, by agents with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. She remains in federal custody. Assistant United States Attorney Gerald C. Carruth is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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